

Message Text

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70

ACTION EUR-12

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R 111200Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5672

INFO AMCONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL NAPLES

ZEN AMCONSUL PALERMO (VIA POUCH)

AMCONSUL FLORENCE

AMCONSUL TRIESTE

AMCONSUL GENOA

AMCONSUL TURIN

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJ: EXTREME LEFTIST PARTY HOLDS CONGRESS

SUMMARY. THE PARTY OF PROLETARIAN UNITY FOR COMMUNISM (PDUP) HELD ITS FIRST NATIONAL CONGRESS IN BOLOGNA FROM JANUARY 29 THROUGH FEBRUARY 1. THE PARTY FAILED TO ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVE OF DEVELOPING A UNITARY LINE WHICH WOULD PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR ACHIEVING A GREATER UNITY AMONG THE EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY (EXTREME LEFTIST) GROUPS CURRENTLY EXISTING IN ITALY. THE FAILURE OF THIS EFFORT FURTHER WEAKENS THE CHANCES OF THE EXTREME LEFTISTS OBTAINING A PARLIAMENTARY FOOTHOLD IN THE NEXT NATIONAL ELECTIONS, AND LESSENS THE POTENTIAL PRESSURE FROM ITS LEFT ON THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI). END SUMMARY.

1. MORE THAN A YEAR AND A HALF AFTER ITS FORMATION AS A RESULT OF A MERGER BETWEEN THE MANIFESTO GROUP (LARGELY LED BY INDIVIDUALS EXPELLED FROM THE PCI IN 1969) AND THE PARTY FOR
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PROLETARIAT UNITY, PDUP HELD ITS FIRST NATIONAL CONGRESS IN

BOLOGNA FROM JANUARY 29 THROUGH FEBRUARY 1. PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE CONGRESS WAS ATTENDED BY 411 DELEGATES REPRESENTING 13,000 MEMBERS OF THE PARTY. (SOME REPORTS INDICATE OFFICIAL PARTY STRENGTH AT BETWEEN 17,000 AND 20,000 MEMBERS.)

2. THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THE CONGRESS WAS TO DRAFT A UNITARY POLITICAL LINE INVOLVING A RECONCILIATION OF THREE PRINCIPLE THEORETICAL LINES EXISTING WITHIN THE YOUNG PARTY. ONE LINE, CENTERED LARGELY AROUND MEMBERS OF THE FORMER MANIFESTO GROUP, ARGUES FOR AN ESSENTIALLY SOFT-LINE TOWARDS THE PCI. THIS GROUP HOLDS THAT THE FUTURE OF ITALY LIES IN AN ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT WHICH WOULD INCLUDE THE PCI. IT ARGUES THAT WHILE THE PCI HAS NOW ADOPTED THE STRATEGY OF THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE, THIS IS NOT A DEFINITIVE LINE AND THE PCI THROUGH DIALOGUE, CULTIVATION, AND FAILURE OF ITS PRESENT STRATEGY CAN BE WON OVER TO THE CONCEPT OF THE ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT. THE SECOND GROUP, COMPOSED LARGELY OF ADHERENTS OF THE NOW DEFUNCT PSIUP PARTY (LEFT SOCIALIST), ARGUES THAT THE PCI HAS MADE ITS CHOICE IN PURSUING THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE AND DOES NOT INTEND TO TURN BACK. THEREFORE, THE PDUP MUST NOT COUNT ON THIS FORCE TO PURSUE THE ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT. FINALLY, THERE IS A SMALL THIRD GROUP WHICH SUGGESTS A LINE MID-WAY BETWEEN THE OTHER TWO LINES AND WHICH ARGUES FOR A RESTRUCTURING OF PDUP'S LEADERSHIP TO REDUCE THE POWER OF THE LEADERSHIP, INCLUDING THE EFFECT OF "VERTICALISM".

3. AS THE CONGRESS WORE ON IT BECAME OBVIOUS THAT THE TWO MAJOR GROUPINGS WERE UNWILLING TO COMPROMISE ON THEIR POSITIONS AND THAT THE THIRD GROUP HAD BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL IN SERVING AS A MEDIATOR FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNITARY PARTY LINE. THE RESULTS OF THE VOTING FOR THE NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE PARTY GAVE 46.8 PERCENT TO THE MANIFESTO GROUPING, 43.8 TO THE EX-PSIUP GROUPING AND 9.4 TO THE THIRD GROUP, WHICH IN EFFECT WILL HAVE THE BALANCE OF POWER IN THE PARTY. THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE MUST NOW MEET TO CHOOSE THE SECRETARIAT OF THE PARTY. GIVEN THE DIVISIONS IN THE PARTY, OBSERVERS DO NOT BELIEVE THAT A GENERAL SECRETARY WILL BE CHOSEN BUT RATHER A COLLECTIVE SECRETARIAT WILL BE ESTABLISHED TO RUN THE PDUP.

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4. COMMENT: HAVING FAILED TO ACHIEVE ITS MAJOR TASK, THE CONGRESS SHOULD BE SEEN AS JUST ONE MORE STEP TOWARD THE GOAL OF ESTABLISHING A UNITARY LINE FOR THE EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY LEFT. THE INABILITY OF PDUP TO ESTABLISH A CLEAR PROGRAM OF ACTION, MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO FORESEE A FURTHER UNIFICATION OF THE FORCES OF THE EXTREME-LEFT AT THIS POINT BY THE DISSOLUTION OF SEVERAL OTHER GROUPS, I.E. AVANTGUARDIA OPERAIO AND LOTTA CONTINUA, AND THEIR INCORPORATION

INTO ONE LARGER PARTY ON THE EXTREME LEFT OF THE ITALIAN
POLITICAL SPECTRUM. THIS FACT, COUPLED WITH THE POOR SHOWING
BY THE PDUP SUPPORTED SLATES IN LAST YEAR'S ADMINISTRATIVE ELEC-
TIONS (1.4 PERCENT OF THE VOTES IN THE REGIONAL ELECTIONS AND
0.5 PERCENT IN THE PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS), SHOULD MAKE IT
EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR PDUP TO GAIN A PARLIAMENTARY FOOTHOLD
IN THE NEXT NATIONAL ELECTIONS. THE MAJOR BENEFACTORS OF THE
LATEST DEVELOPMENT ARE THE COMMUNISTS WHO, AT THIS PARTICULAR
JUNCTURE, CAN BE LESS CONCERNED BY A THREAT TO THEIR ELECTORAL
POSITION FROM THE LEFT.VOLPE

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